

H&SS A 6126



THE

Poet's Blind mans bough,

OR

Have among you my blind Harpers:

BEING

A pretty medicine to cure the Dimme, Double, Envious, Partiall, and Diabolicall eyesight Indgement

ΟF

Those Dogmaticall, Schismaticall, Aenigmaticall, and nou Gramaticall Authors who Lycentiously, without eyther Name, Lycence, Wit or Charity, have raylingly, falsely, and foolishly written a numerous rable of pesteferous Pamphlets in this present (and the precedent year, justly observed and charitably censured,

By Martine Parker.



Printed at London by F. Leach, for Henry Marsh, and are to bee sold at his shop over against the golden Lyon Tavern in Princes street. 1641.





INTRODUCTION.

TRE know nothing about Martin Parker as a verse-maker before 1628, in which year he published a broadside, entitled :-" Rochell, her yielding to the obedience of the French King, on the 28 October, 1628, after a long siege by land and sea, in great penury and want. Γo the tune of In the days of old. Printed at London for 1. Wright." Ile also employed himself upon Romances, the first known of which was licensed 29 Feb., 1631-2, as "A True Tale of Robbin Hood, or a briefe touch of the life and death of that Renowned Outlaw, Robert Earle, of Huntington, vulgarly called Robbin Hood, who lived and died in A.D. 1198, being the 9 yeare of the reigne of King Richard the First, commonly called Richard Cuer de Lyon. Carefully collected out of the truest Writers of our English Chronicles. And published for the satisfaction of those who desire to see Truth purged from falsehood. By Martin Parker. Printed at London for T. Cotes, and are to be sold by F. Grove, dwelling upon Snow-hill, neare the Saracen's Head. It is in 11 leaves Svo, and in the Stack Eetter. In 1632 he put forth "The Nightingale Warbling forth her owne Disaster: or the Rape of Philomela, newly written in English Verse. By Martin Parker. London, Printed by G. P. for William Cooke, 1632, small 8vo, 22 leaves, which he dedicated to Henry Parker, Lord Morley, and Mounteagle: in his address to the Reader he pleads hard for an impartial hearing and judgment.

No particulars, says Collier, have reached us regarding Parker's private history, but from and after 1628 he seems to have continually employed his pen, like his predecessor Thomas Deloney, upon nearly every public occasion, besides producing innumerable ballads upon miscellaneous topics. He had many rivals and imitators, such as Guy, Crouch, Climsell, Price, and others, but none of them possessed or attained the same readiness in rhyming, or appear to have been gifted with the same natural humour. Although in his earliest known productions Parker attempted a serious and sentimental strain,

his talents was more for subjects of a comic description, as will be seen in such pieces as "The King and a poore Northern Man," "The King enjoys his own again," &c. The last was written during the Civil Wars, and, as may be readily supposed, was astonishingly popular among the Cavaliers, both before and after the Restoration. He also wrote several Romances, which he published as, "The true story of Guy Earle of Warwicke, 1640. The most admirable Historie of that most Renowned Christian Worthy Arthur, King of the Britaines. [Col.] London, printed for Francis Coles, at the Signe of the Lamb, in the Old Bailey, 1660. The History of Valentine and Orson, the two Sons of the Emperor of Greece. London, printed and sold by C. Tyus 1664.1

When Martin Parker ceased to produce his rhymes, or when or where he died, we cannot state*—In 1646 it is possible that he was in high repute, for S. Sheppard, in his "Times Displayed," printed in that year, thus speaks of the sort of reputation as a poet which Parker then enjoyed:—

"Each fellow, now that has but had a view Of the learned Phrygian's Fables, groweth bold, And name of Poet doth to himself accrew: That ballad maker, too, is now extold With the great name of Poet."

In order that no mistake might he made as to the person intended, Sheppard inserted the initials of Martin Parker in his margin.

"A True and Terrible Narration of A Lorrible Earthquake, which happened in the Province of Calabria (in the Kingdome of Naples, under the dominion of the King of Spaine) in Italy, upon the 27 of March last past according to Forraigne account, and by our English computation, the 17 and the Festivity of S. Patrick; to the devastation and depopulation (some totally, some in part) of S great Cities, and 24 Townes and Castles (in the compasse of some 612. miles English) and the death of some 50000 persons, of all degrees, sexe, and age. The like never heard of in precedent times. From pregnant atestation, written in English verse By Martin Parker. With a memorable List of some other Earthquaks and horrible accidents, which have heretofore happened in England.—Printed at London by Tho. Cotes for Ralph Mabb, and Fr. Grove, and are to besold at his Shop upon Snow hill, neere the Sarazins-head. 1638. Svo. 8 leaces."

This is a very large and elaborate title to a very small book, but too long to be printed as a broadside, and therefore brought out in the shape of a chapbook. It consists of 50 six-line stranzas; and on the last leaf but one begins "A memoriall or List of some Earthquakes and other horrible accidents

⁺Collier.

which heretofore have hapned in England:" it applies to the years A.M. 3907, A.D. 788, 1088, 1098, 1550 and 1579, the last on 6th April; but for 1579 we ought to read 1580, as given by earlier, as well as later authorities. Of the Earthquake in Calabria Parker says—

"It is no newes brought from Duke Humphryes tombe, Nor Graves-end Barge; nor any thing invented, But what from Venice did (to England) come, Where in Italian twas (with Licence) printed. If any to gainesay it goes about,

He may as well of any writings doubt."

The Narrative is generally very prosaic, though written in verse, as far as

facility goes, not bad. It opens thus :-

"A sable quill puld from a Ravens wing
My muse would be accommodated with,
An instrument fit for this mourful thing
Of which I purpose to set down the pith.
It is a subject which may teares extract
From him who all his life computation lakt."

It ends with this stranza :--

"Lesty, lets all invoke the Power Divine
To keepe us from destruction and mishaps,
And that his favours on us still may shine
Defending us from all the snares and traps
Which enemies may lay to this effect.
Our King, Queene, and blest Issue. Lord protect!

Amen."

This tract is mentioned in both editions of Lowndes' Bibl. Manual, but it is not stated where a copy is to be found: we never saw any other than the one to which we have resorted.

It is impossible to give anything like a list of Parker's various pieces: many of them were merely broad-side ballads, and continued to be reprinted in the same shape, until the commencement of the eighteenth century, almost invariably with the name or initials of the writer at the end of them. One of the earliest and most remarkable of these was his account of the procession of "The Inns of Court Gentlemen" to Whitehall, in 1633, for the performance of Shirley's "Masque of Peace," it is ornamented with a wood-cut of a Cavalcade. It was written "to the tune of our Noble King in his Progress," and is, as usual, in two parts, with M. P. in the corner, for he says:—

"Whatever yet was published by me,

Was known by 'Martin Parker' or M. P."

Much about Martin Parker and his company of ballad writers, has been collected in Chappell's Popular Music of the Olden Time, pages 418 to 420 and 434-5. See also Mr. Payne Collier's Bibliographical Catalogue, vol. II. Mr. W. C. Hazlitt's Handbook to Early English Literature, and the introduction to The King and a poore Northern Man. Printed by the Percy Society.

Of "The Poet's Blind Man's Bough; or, Have among you my Blind Harpers, &c.," Collier says it is "a very badly printed, and not well penned tract, which the author could not have looked at while it was going through the press, or such gross blunders as it contains could never have escaped him,"—most of which we have corrected in our "READABLE REPRINT."

It certainly was by no means the common practise of our old authors to correct their own proofs, and hence the frequent and glaring mistakes.

The object of Parker was to reply with severity to some anonymous scribblers, who had assailed him, especially as one of the defenders of Laud.

It seems that all the attacks upon Parker had not been all anonymous, since he places the name of John Thomas, in the margin, as the writer of at least some of them.

In a "Postscript" Parker makes an evident allusion to "The Scourge for Paper Persecutors" by John Davis, of Hereford, which having been originally printed about 1610, had been reprinted, at London for H. H. and G. G., &c., 1625, and was composed in something like the same spirit, and not with a very different purpose.

All Parker's productions were more or less popular, and it cannot be said that he wrote beyond, or above, the period in which he lived: he used to pen to please the multitude, and not to elevate it.



TO

THE TRULY JUDICIOUS, IMPARTIAL CHARITABLE, AND IMPREJUDICATED CHRISTIAN

Reader of what quality age or sex soever, the Author dedicates his poor endeavours and refers himself with the same.

I.

IGHT Honourable, Worshipful, and right Fudicious Christian Readers be content, Kindly l'accept what (to give all delight,

And vindicate myself) I did invent,
For to no other end this time I spent
But in this small compendium to frame
Something that's short and true; Liars to shame.

2.

Here's matter both for modesty and sport, With charitable reprehensions for Those who have fill'd both Country, City, Court And Camp with Libels void of reason, or The fear of Heaven (who doth such things abhor) Buy, Read, and Judge, then questionless you'll say That I have shown fair (for their base) foul play.

3.

Still I hope good men will contented be,
With what is Publish'd by (abus'd) M.P.
Who never wrote but in the Fust defence,
Of's King and Country; now's own innocence.

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THE POET'S BLIND MAN'S BOUGH.

OME Namesis lend me [a] little twig,
Though these delinquents faults are very big,

Yet I (though much exasperated) will Mix mercy with revenge, do good for ill. My work may now be term'd a demi Satyre,

My muse hates Railing, as she Scorns to Flatter, Though Justice hold her scales with equal poise, Charity sways the beam; she none destroys, Some she will check, and tell them of their deeds, From which rebuke if happily proceeds, Any amendment, she'll be like the nurse, That whips a child whom she loves ne'er the worse, Should I but give them their deserved due, Whom though I know not that most shameless crew Of nameless Authors, Authors all of lies, Of slanderous Pasquills railing fallacies, I might my pen dip in that learnean Sink, Which the infernal furies use for ink,

Or with Iambian rhymes Ironical, Make lines should serve for ropes to hang them all But no such cruelty is in my breast, All my abuses I can take in Jest. And give such Idiots leave to write or speak, Eagles slight notice take when crows do creak You cankers of the state, nay rather you, Vultures: when law and death have said their due, Do even gnaw the heart of him that's dead, In this regard may't not be truly so said, That you are Pluto's fiddlers, that for pay, Upon the guts of th' dead do play and prey, Presumptious, Petulent, flagitious, dolts dost, Untrue, unserviceable, unback'd coats, Durst you beyond the letter of the Law, Presume among yourselves to hang and draw You do assume the place, to say the troth, Of Apprehender, Judge, and hangman both, When any hath offended 'gainst the state Must such as you the fact exaggerate, Have you such clear eyes that you can espy, That little moat that's in your brothers eye, Making a mountain of each molehill when You do not see the beams (O senseless men) That in your own eyes so prevents your Sight And Judgment that you dare (be 't wrong or right) Save or condemn at pleasure; can your pates. Determine more than Law or Magistrates,

Of these your facts he who will censure best, Cannot but say that you intend to wrest, The sword of Justice from the hand of them To whom 'tis due by Justice to condemn, Or save with mercy: heaven forbid I should, Excuse the faults of those whom Law doth hold. Worthy of punishment, or death, or bonds, My very Soul most aptly Corresponds, With this; and so it ever shall that those, Whom Law doth prove my King or countrys foes, That they have their demerits, curst be him, (For my part) that where Justice doth condemn, Will wish to save, especially Such men, Whose deeds deserves worse than a vulgar pen. Upon them can confer, yet (take my word) More danger comes by th'quill than by the Sword, Let those delinquents of the higher strain, Alone with what is said; and now again, My muse returns unto her task: which is To tell these Libellers what deep abuse, Of hellish skill, th'ave founded to compose, Such fond invectives both in rhyme and prose. Nay come along ne'er shrink or blush for shame, The're none knows either of you by your name; Those you were sham'd to show there's reason for't. Least after ages a deserved sport Might make of you (or your posterity,) Unnam'd the Authors shame with's lines will die.

But my desire and whole intent is that, Your folly being in general aimed at Each one may take his share of shame and say In doing this I have not showed fair play: For what is either more or less set forth 'Gainst persons in particular; what worth Or fame among the vulgar it may win Without the Authors name 't hath ever been Held as a Libel both in Law and sense. Than he who writes (whate'er be his pretence) His name should justify what he hath done, This maxim I have always thought upon Whatever yet was published by me, Was known by Martin Parker, or M.P. All Poets (as addition to their fames) Have by their Works eternalized their names, As Chaucer, Spencer, and that noble earl, Of Surrey thought it the most precious pearl, That deck'd his honour, to Subscribe to what His high ingenuity ever aimed at Sydney and Shakspeare, Drayton, Withers and Renowned Fonson glory of our Land: Decker, Learn'd Chapman, Heywood all thought good. To have their names in public understood. And that sweet Seraph of our Nation, Quarles (In spite of each splenetic cur that snarls) Subscribes to his Celestial harmony, While Angels chant his Dulcid melody.

And honest $\mathcal{F}ohn^1$ from the water to the land Makes us all know and honour him by's hand: And many more whose names I should have told In their due place, in famous record enroll'd. Have thought it honest honour to set down Their names or letters to what is their own: But you a litter of blind whelps begot By Cerberus, the scum of nature's pot, Suborn'd by malice and a little gains, Invent and publish what your frothy brains, Evaporate some prose and some in rhymes, Only to please the fancy of the times Idle Chimeras, structures seeming fair, Which view'd, are prov'd mere castles in the air. Almanack Makers, were they of your mind, (Instead of Saints to every day assign'd) Might make a transmutation, and name all By your quotidian Pamphlets critical, And days canicular should last all th' year If curish writers they may domineer; The Press overprest, and (justly) groans Under the burthen of those heavy tones Of Screech-owl music threat'ning death and hell. One striving all in malice to excel; And he who can best rail, scoff, and invent, The greatest lies, shall give the most content:

^{&#}x27;Honest John,-John Taylor the Water-Poet.

Is this the age that doth most truth profess, Are these the days of zeal and righteousness; Are these the times that hath more light discover'd Revealing secrets that in darkness err'd Why then, O why are lies and falsehoods spread, Shall men by lying earn their daily bread; Shall truth thus suffer paper persecution, Shall things well ordered hazard a confusion By those unsanctified pens which write Nothing but what to mischief may incite, Inventing still the theory of plots Which none to practice ever thought these sots Bewray their folly; for they want both wit And judgment, for their fables do not fit The last of probability, which should, Produce such reasons for the tale that's told. That they who hear it may conjecture that It may be true; but these men care not what They write, be 't contradictory or not, So they can get the silver by the plot; But (as friends) I friendly them advise, That if hereafter they write any lies Let them more likely be than that which was Composed by some short hair'd, long ear'd Ass, Of a strange plot (beyond imagination To give the Arch-Bishop his free relaxation Out of the Tower by Necromantic spells, Themselves did only know it, but none else.

Note how that ancient liar (most accurst.) A liar even from the very first Beginning of the world, by 's instruments, With subtilty mens judgments circumvents; Making the fabric of his building all Of lies, which fools esteem Authentical: Yet power divine so boundeth him and his. That of their envious aims they often miss. Shaming themselves (by over-reaching) so. That even to fools, their shame they freely show, As well appears in this imagin'd plot, Making the world believe that which was not Had such a thing (being 'twas known a fiction. And might at home expect a contradiction) Been feign'd to be in Cornwall or in Wales, Cumberland, or Yorkshire: then such tales Perhaps might win belief; but here in the city Where every child of eight years old that 's witty. Knows there was no such thing, oh what disgrace Is this to th' Author durst he show his face. Or set his name to th' fable, stay there sir. We'll not be known so palpably to err; The aim the Author shot at is to bring Papists in hatred; 'tis a pious thing. But tell me brother (how or by what chance) Cam'st thou to play on people's ignorance, Think'st thou the worlds all wild and all men mad, That they'll condemn those who thou countest bad,

Hath not the Honourable Parliament. (That hopeful Senate) wisdom to prevent, Such machinations (if there any were) But who must dictate to them, dost not fear. Future examinations for such crimes Or dost thou mean ever to trust these times: What is th' archbishop to the Papists that They should adventure life and fortune at So dear a rate, he never was their friend, Arminians never did on Rome depend: 'Tis known apparently what sad report, Papists may give the High commission Court; Twas high indeed for them, too high a rate Poor men did pay: which might exact a hate Rather than love; but charity says no Let law take place, 'tis fit it should be so, Heaven grant his Grace from the well spring of grace,

And that he may return while he hath space Unto the throne of grace; by penitence, Let us not aggravate what's his offence:
Nor whilst I'm speaking of the Archbishops case. Let me examine that malicious base, And senseless Libel Mercuries Message nam'd Whom the Author to recognize was asham'd. And well he might, for amongst his lies unholy One thing ath'first doth most bewray his folly And that's the Cronagram which he to make

Upon th'Arch-bishops name doth undertake; And by the numeral letters their exprest He would denote the number of the beast Mention'd in the Apocalypse which is Six hundred sixty-six, now censure his, Deduction and doubt not but you'll find (As I have done) the beast lay's beastly mind, How like a monstrous beast 'twixt dog and ass He enviously and simply doth pass, His verdiction the man, for thus writes he 'Tis WILL: LAWD.

Two V's he numbers ten I one, three L's, Seven score and ten, (thus he his lesson spells) V for five more. D for five hundred, thus He makes six hundred sixty-six, let us Confess 'tis true so far, but to condemn The Prisoner, he omits both I and M, Which is the name, and makes the number even, One thousand six hundred sixty-seven. See now this envious Cynic, how to win, Credit 'mongst fools commits a deadly sin, For surely malice was predominant. Nor can I think the fool so Ignorant, As that he would or could assume to frame: A Chronagram and knew not the right name, Or else his spite was so toth' Bishops that, He would deprive him of th' most part of what, His God-father did give him at the Font.

Is this your calculation, out upon't; But should this envious Author undertake. A Chronagram or Anagram to make; For any one of whom he is a lover. Wer't an unlearn'd Translator or a Glover: A Currier or a Weaver, then no doubt. Rather than he would leave [a] letter out, He'd venture to exchange or else to add, So he could make a good sense of a bad, He would (perhaps) But M. In the N's place, To make it answer to the year of grace. But the Arch-Bishop) whom few now applaud) Must be contented to be called Will Laud. But one thing I must marvel at; which is, That he who answered it, with th'cimphasis, [?] Of wit and sense; who stoutly did defend, The Arch-Bishop as his Champion and true friend, Exacting praise from some, from others blame, Yet never censur'd this false chronagram Which negligence and monstrous over-sight, Extenuates his credit who did write, That Vindication; passed as the rest, Without the Authors name: though it is guest That Thomas Herbert wrote it, but that fame Rose from th'Acrostic known to be his name, Written by him ath' end of th'book, that's all, The reason which indeed's irrational. For no man that's the author of a book

But sets his name whereon all easily look
Upon the frontispiece (or title page)
Unless he be preposterous (like the age),
But let that pass; for I must, pass from this
To other things wherein are more amiss;
More malice, more absurdity, and more
Nonsense than any mentioned before
A plot discover'd of an army good,
Secretly lurking in a private wood.
If any such be in Northamptonshire
Where Soldiers, all unknown to th'neighbours

Could lie in ambush such a Multitude,
And be maintain'd with quotidian food,
With other necessaries fit for men
Let any of indifferent judgment scan
Each circumstance of this pretended plot,
And they will find the Author out a Sot:
One that so far beyond all disability
Doth stretch his lies (which shows his imbecility)
That even to children he bewrays his shame,
One man's the Author of both plots, his name
I since have understood, who on no ground
But his pestiferous fancy to confound,
Those who ne'er meant him harm
That this his poisonous venom spits abroad,
Bewraying envy, Ignorance, and spleen

And all in vain, for not one in fifteen

John Thomas Gives credit to's narrations; and those few, That are so confident to think all true, Are some whose judgments are prejudicated With malice; people so consopiated, In mischief: must by ignorance that they Believe what any one can write or say, So't be 'gainst those whom they do affect But any of well govern'd intellect (Whose judgments are with reason regulated) Will say of Knave and fool naught can be bated. So let him rest till heaven turn his heart, To mix more charity with his small art, That he and all the rest of th' Pamphleteers, May use more fervent prayers, and fewer leers. To practise truth (which all of them pretend), And not their precious time so lewdly spend In sowing tears of Schismy and debate, By devilish means falsehood to propagate; Shaming themselves, not whom they seek to shame, Blaming of other people, when the blame Upon their own heads justly may be laid I do admire that they are not afraid, Of divine Judgment which on them might fall, When against conscience and law rational, They do invent such execrable lies, To make men odious in the peoples eyes, Contrary to all charity, and grace Making their fond Chimeras to take place,

Instead of solid truth, these are the men Who make a show of zeal, and conscience when Their deeds and writings 'gainst the public weal Prove they have neither conscience, truth nor zeal; Charity bids us pray one for another, But brother here vituperates his brother: . But why (may some men say) should this man be The only Censurer; could none but he Espy these faults, must be be the only man The works of other men to search and scan. Yes reader whosoever thou be I this Must tell thee freely, there good reason is For what is done or to be done, and more Than charity will suffer; which in store, The author ever keeps to regulate His words and deeds 'gainst all who do him hate, For he 'bove all the rest hath wronged been Tasting the bitter gall of hellish spleen, Which these malignant serpents could eject To make the world his innocence suspect, In divers pamphlets, what e'er currish barker, The author was, he snarl'd at Martin Parker. Nor Borealist by some brother pen, Vet father'd on a sect to this end. To bring me in disgrace; as though 1 had, Been punished heretofore for writing bad, Calling me th'Prelates Poet and such terms Which nothing but his spite at all confirms

For I ne'er wrote ith' Bishops cause so much. As now I have on this occasion touch. Another foolish idle defamation That is intitl'd the Popish Proclamation, The unnam'd Author (as in all a railer) Occasion takes to abuse me and Fohn Taylor With Herbert, but wherefore I cannot tell. Nor he himself that wrote it very well: For he one whom though his will were bent, Wanteth ability for his intent: And yet he could in his bare garden stuff, (Which with Tobacco I do take in snuff) Take liberty to name me in his Ieers. But in his works such plain nonsense appears, That I account his pen to be no slander. From true method he so far doth wander, That all who read may judge (if they have wit) That what he writes although his name's to it. Deserves no approbation; yet this lad I malice not, but rather should be glad, To know him change his envy for more skill He can'ot disgrace me, writing what he will. Thus much for him, and indeed all the rest To none I am angry an enemy protest, But wish them more good than themselves will do. I will be patient and Physician too.

FINIS.

Postscript.



ERHAPS the Reader may expect I should, More of these slanderous, envious sleights unfold,

Because they more deserve; indeed 'tis true Write what I can I shan't give them their due: This little therefore serveth for a taste, By which more may be guest there's too much waste Of paper made already, in two years: By these calumnious idle pamphleteers, Should this diurnal Lavish, two years more Continue; we may fear (there's cause wherefore) That we should scarce get paper for good use, If we persevere in this great abuse, I have but broke the Ice, some coadjutors Will help to scourge these paper-persecutors.

FINIS.







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